

Face to Face (Back to Back)

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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Abstract

Face to Face (Back to Back) is a play that confronts topics such as gender stereotyping, sexuality, and toxic masculinity. The play follows Lillian and Benjamin, two collegiate ballroom dancers who struggle to find their place in the world of collegiate ballroom competitions and their place with each other. They come together in an effort to inspire change in the ballroom world—one that is generally stuck in old world traditions and strict gender roles. I wrote *Face to Face (Back to Back)*, organized marketing efforts, and produced a staged reading of the play.

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Process Analysis

Introduction

Face to Face (Back to Back) is the title of my thesis and the name of my play, which I wrote and shared publicly with a staged reading. The tells the story of Lillian and Benjamin, two collegiate ballroom dancers who struggle with issues like self-expression, toxic masculinity, and unrequited love. I will discuss challenges and obstacles I ran into and how I overcame them. I will include a few journals entries I made over the course of writing and rehearsing the play. My process analysis will cover everything including my inspiration for the project, the play itself, and how I went about staging a reading for the play.

In my process analysis statement, I will discuss how I chose my project for my thesis. Once I chose my project, more choices ensued. I will discuss how I worked through my process and how it all came together. I will follow that with a reflection on the process and how it impacted me, what I learned, and where I will go from here.

Choosing a Project

When I began my thesis, I had a hard time settling on a project. I had so many ideas and different avenues I wanted to explore. I think some of this stems from my passion for so many aspects of theatre. As a theatrical studies major, my degree is pretty broad. During my time at Ball State University, I have focused on many areas of study within my major - voice, acting, business/management, and lighting. Performing has been my passion of focus for many years now. I automatically assumed that I would be doing a performance of some sort. My first idea was a cabaret. This idea blossomed more when I decided it would be a cabaret that I would design and tech lights for. As I added multiple production assignments for myself, I realized my ideas were getting bigger and bigger, going to a place just outside my reach. All of the sudden I

went from a small cabaret to an entire One Person Show where I was going to write, perform, and run tech.

All of these topics appealed to me, but when I thought about it, I really wanted to make sure that I was doing something I hadn't done before. I've performed in front of people and I've designed the lights for main stage shows at Ball State. But what I hadn't done was write a play and have it performed in front of an audience. Since I am so interested in performance however, I thought it would be fun to do a performance of some sort along with writing the play. I decided to do a staged reading so that some action could be performed, and all of the play could be spoken. I wanted to keep the focus on the writing, but I also wanted to write something I could perform in. I wanted to be in the play and I also wanted to write about something that I had a personal connection to. I've so enjoyed getting to learn about theatre that is more than a pretty picture and superficial. I wanted practice creating the work that inspires me.

Starting the Project

A few steps followed when I decided to do the staged reading. I had to find a cast, a space, and other materials (like binders, music stands, etc.). Along with the performance aspect came a necessity for marketing. It was important to me to publicize the reading because I want to continue bettering the play, even after it has been turned in for my thesis. Plays go through many edits before they are fully finalized and this staged reading is just step one. I plan on using the feedback I received from my peers after the staged reading to inform the next edits along this play's journey.

Before I started writing, I started brainstorming about how I was going to combine ballroom and theatre. During my time at Ball State, I have taken many classes to prepare me for this thesis. I have taken classes in theatre history, performance, and marketing. The theatre

history classes helped me find a foundation on which to build my new play. Where do I want it to sit in relation to the theatre that has come before? Is this a story that has been told, or has it been waiting to be told? The performance classes were useful for writing monologues, which I had to do for an Acting 2 class, and for the actual performance aspect of producing a staged reading. I took a playwriting class, the only writing specific class that had me doing writing as the work for a class, that actually helped me to write this play. I also have a minor in business on top of my theatre major. I learned how to make a marketing plan, give my sales pitch, and how to turn words into action. My Social Media Marketing class was particularly helpful for this project; I used social media as my main mode of communicating with my prospective audience. For the class, we had to earn certifications from Hootsuite and HubSpot to further our knowledge on social media marketing. All of this was very useful in ensuring my performance had an audience. I had to use all of these skills to build my play, stage it, and bring in an audience.

Writing the Play

Face to Face (Back to Back) focuses on two ballroom dancers, Lillian and Benjamin. Lillian is working at the activity fair for her ballroom club when Benjamin enters and agrees to give the club a try. Lillian teaches him and trains with him and the two grow closer. Lillian wants to win a ribbon, but Benjamin is really interested in ballroom and dancing as a form of self-expression and fun. The couple sets rules about their dance partnership. At the end of this conversation, they agree keeping secrets from each other should be against their new rules. Lillian tells Benjamin she's in love with him and Benjamin tells Lillian he is gay. Lillian reacts poorly pushing him away and even goes so far as to try to ambush him with a different dance partner. She loses Benjamin and her other best friend because of her actions. She eventually ends up apologizing to him and they work through their issues with each other. She decides winning

isn't as important and commits to helping Benjamin push the gender restrictions in ballroom. The final scene takes place five years in the future when a younger student approaches Benjamin and Lillian and thanks them for being an inspiration.

When I was writing, I decided to focus on ballroom dancing and the relationships that develop from dancing together for my play because these topics have been near and dear to my heart since I started college. I learned about the ballroom club through the activity fair, just like Benjamin did. Ballroom has been my sole focus in college aside from theatre. I met my best friends here, some of whom have been subjected to the same issues the characters in this play face. When I was nervous and not really clicking with the theatre department, ballroom became my home away from home. The people in this play are real people for me. They are the ones who brought me in and helped my confidence grow. They taught me how to dance and how to interact with strangers in a social dance setting. This club is also where I got my first leadership experience. I was treasurer my sophomore year, vice president my junior year, and now I am President in my senior year. I've learned leadership with my peers through this outlet, but it has also improved my communication skills with professionals in the ballroom world. One of the coaches for our team was a part of the inspiration for my play. He was another person I met who was heavily invested in both theatre and ballroom dancing. For the most part, there aren't a ton of theatre majors in Cardinal Ballroom, so it was nice having a contact both as someone to bounce ideas off of and get feedback from.

I broke down the writing of this play into three main stages: Beginning ten pages, middle ten pages, and end ten pages. I knew I wanted the play to be a one act play, so this breakdown ended up being really useful. I did my best to monitor my writing habits during the course of the project. I learned that I produce higher quality products when I spread the work out a little more.

I was more productive when I didn't trap myself into a short time frame. I work better when I am sitting at a desk or table, not sitting on my floor or bed (some of my previous workspaces). When writing the play, I struggled most with the last section of the play. I had to make sure I didn't end the conflict too quickly, even if I found multiple ways to do so. Because I wanted the play to be a one act play, I had to make sure it was at least 30 pages. In general, when writing, I have to make an effort to not end my work too early.

I shared this play in Playwriting 1 to receive feedback from my peers. I did three sessions, in which we did a reading in class followed by feedback, both written and verbal. The feedback from this class fueled two of my revisions alone. I enjoyed listening to the questions and ideas they had about the play. The most useful information I got out of this process was making sure the play was understandable and enjoyable for people who didn't know ballroom as well as I do. I wanted it to be easy for non-ballroom dancers to understand, but I also worked really hard to finesse the details so the most professional of dancers would pick up small details. To help my non-ballroom audience, I used stage directions to be helpful to a creative team that may not be as well versed in the ballroom world. I made sure each of the dances worked on are dances done at ballroom competitions. Even all the way down to the videos I planned on using for the staged reading, I used collegiate competitors.

Planning a Staged Reading

After I moved from conceptual idea to thinking about the actual logistics of how I was going to put on a staged reading of this play, I started looking for my company. I started with the director. One of the biggest challenges of this project was finding a director. I needed to find someone who would have the time to commit to a project outside of their academic work. I also wanted someone comfortable with working with me as both a playwright and actor. Theatre is

supposed to be all about collaboration, so I wanted to find someone comfortable with giving me advice even though this is my project. But, I also needed to find someone who would let me do the work I needed to in the room to make sure this play headed in a direction I wanted. I reached out to a couple of different people before I landed with the director I worked with. Claire ended up being an invaluable resource and I'm so glad I found her. Not only did I find someone with directing experience, but she also had experience working with new works and she also had experience ballroom dancing.

I also had to worry about finding my cast. It was really important to me that Benjamin and Lillian were played by characters who were very comfortable with ballroom dancing. If I were to cast it outside of the restrictions I had working at Ball State (ie not enough high level collegiate ballroom dancers), I would have preferred dancers with more talented than I casted. Ideally, no video would be used in a production of this show. The moments I had planned on using video in my staged reading for would be real people, so their skill levels would have to varied. I also had a few issues with people committing to the project, but then backing out. We went through a couple versions of a cast list until I landed with my final cast.

At the first meeting I had with my advisor, we decided it would be a smart idea to set a calendar up so I could hold myself accountable. Along with the calendar, weekly meetings also helped to keep me on track and responsible. I started off strong with my due dates, but as the semester wore on and other assignments started creeping their way into my days, I fell off the wagon. Once I finished my show assignment and got to start with rehearsals, I was reinvigorated and much more motivated to work on the process. Even though I had my calendar, I did run into conflict with scheduling. I was not proactive enough starting the process, which made the rehearsal schedule a little squished. I sent my script to my director in January, but she didn't

have it read until the middle of March. I should have been more proactive when it came to at least getting a group of people together to read the script, even if it was just a read through without the director. I could have started on the choreography earlier than I did as well, but unfortunately, did not. I had big ideas that were hard to squeeze into the short rehearsal period. Due to the number of capstones and other projects happening around the time of my show, I also struggled a little with casting. I had to compete with busy schedules and actors I contacted already working on projects. I had multiple actors agree to work on the show, but then a conflict came up and they were unable to be on campus for the performance. In the end though, I'm really happy with the cast I gathered for the reading.

Another challenge I faced was finding the right space for a staged reading. When I was originally looking for a space, my immediate thought was to place the staged reading in the ballroom in the Student Center. I liked the idea of doing a show about ballroom in the ballroom. I also liked the idea of how much space I would have to play with for the dancing. The ballroom is one of the few rooms on campus with a floor similar to the size of a competition floor. As I moved through the process, however, I decided the ballroom would be too large a space for staged reading. If I were putting on the play in a fuller sense, I think the ballroom would have been most ideal. I didn't want the project to seem smaller than it was because the ballroom has so much potential for seating, and I didn't want to highlight a lack of people. I also didn't want the actors to have to project to a room so loud. I felt like putting on the reading in a dance studio in the rec is a part of the story that Lillian helps Benjamin learn how to ballroom dance. In the same way that an artist's job is never done, a dancer's isn't either. There is always room for improvement and practice. Putting the reading in a practice studio is also a nod to the work

Benjamin and Lillian will still have to do once the play ends. I'm excited to do the staged reading in the same place I learned to dance.

Once I had a time, place, and cast set, I started focusing on the marketing for the play. I worked with the director to come up with different ways to advertise the show. I asked a collaborator to make a poster for the reading. The poster was useful for promotion, and it helped to provide a unified image for the project. One of the most important lessons I learned in marketing was the basic idea of marketing: marketing is a way to communicate with your customer. The poster is both aesthetically pleasing, and it also provides a solid foundation of information. In today's digital age, posters aren't enough, so I also created a Facebook event. I wanted the page to be a little more interesting than just, "Come see my work because you are my friends and you want to support me." I wanted to show the people who followed the Facebook event that going to the reading would be worth their time. We also decided to do a mini lesson at the end of the reading for anyone who wanted to stay. This was a way to engage the audience further. It was also a way to advertise for the ballroom club on campus. Work for the project picked up as I worked on the marketing and started rehearsals.

The longer I worked on the play in rehearsal and looked at the script, the more ideas I had growing in my head of ways to increase the length of the play to an entire 2-Act show. I built up more ideas for character development and possible plot points I would like to add in. A lot of the ideas came from just spending more time with the piece. It was really useful to have actors to bring the characters and the play to life. The acting and the feedback I've received has been very helpful. I want to give Lillian some more redeeming qualities. I want to give Benjamin more flaws. After reading the script out loud, I felt like the imbalance was hard to ignore and there will be a rewrite to correct this before the show is performed again.

Rehearsal and Performance

Rehearsals for the show went pretty well. On April 9th, I wrote, “We had our first rehearsal tonight. I felt an interesting dynamic in the room when it came to leading the rehearsal. There was a weird balance between Claire and I since we were both in charge, just in different capacities. The atmosphere was relaxed and mostly professional. People didn’t fall off track until the reading was over, which I really appreciated. I also appreciated everyone who was there to help me and to work with me. There were a lot of issues in the text that were brought to light as I heard the lines read out loud. I decided to change up the dances happening within the scenes to offer a little more variety. This was the first time I heard the play read as a whole, so I recognized some repetition that I am working to fix!” Towards the end of the rehearsal process, I attended a “Discovery New Works” talkback in Strother Theatre. I listened to playwrights and directors talk about their preferred relationship during the process of bringing a new work to life. One of the most useful ideas I pulled from the talkback was the importance of letting the director, cast, and creative team take the show and run with it, as a way to show how the text informs the people putting your show on. I wish this was something I had heard before I started my process. I feel like I jumped in and answered questions as opposed to letting everyone come to their own conclusions based on the text. I think implementing what I learned would have been a great way to go about my rehearsal process.

The performance went as well as it could have, circumstances being what they were. I scheduled this reading in the middle of April-- a time when there are many capstones and thesis presentations. On top of that, students are really busy with end of year work and worrying about summer plans. Due to a general busyness in the student body, my reading had low attendance. There were eight people in the audience, but there was a nice mix of people. I had ballroom

dancers, middle-aged audience members, and students who didn't know a lot about ballroom previously. I also had a lot of tech issues the day of the performance. There were supposed to be projections to go along with the staged reading, to show off the levels of dancing that would ideally be achieved in the show, but we couldn't connect to the projector. My entire cast and production team was stumped so we asked for help from the staff at the recreation center, but they also couldn't figure it out. Luckily, descriptions for what was supposed to be seen in the videos were also in the stage directions. The audience didn't seem to care that they were missing out on the videos, they were just excited that there was dancing at all.

There were a few key parts that excited the audience. In general, the audience members who didn't have a background in ballroom had no trouble with the play. According to the feedback I received, the stage directions, the mini demonstrations, and the dialogue all did a good job conveying the information the audience needed. Many people wrote that they liked the way dancing was incorporated in the reading. Another portion of the audience was most excited about Benjamin's storyline—his love interest and the way he grew comfortable with his gender expression and sexuality.

There were two main ways that the audience heard about the show: word of mouth and Facebook. The fact that these two avenues were the most popular is no surprise. Multiple studies have been done about the best ways to influence customers to take action. Word of mouth is a really popular way to get people motivated to do something or go to something because they are typically hearing the news from someone they trust. If someone they trust tells them about an exciting event, people are likely to check it out. It is also true that social media has been a marketing tool on the rise. In today's digital age, it is easier than ever to reach consumers. One of the nice things about Facebook is that it is both advertising and word of mouth. The

advertisements are spread when friends and family promote an event. On top of that, the potential audience members will have access to details in writing if they click on a Facebook event.

Reflection and Conclusion

While there were many aspects that flourished during this project, there are also some changes I would make if I were to restart this project. If I were to start this project over again, I would definitely start earlier. I would involve the actors in the process a lot earlier. It was a really different experience witnessing the play on paper than it was to experience it in the voices and movements of the actors I casted. After listening to them read through the script, I noticed some changes that I really wanted to make, but the changes are big, fundamental changes that will have to occur as the play grows. Many plays go through multiple rewrites and revisions, even after they've been performed for an audience. A few ideas I have include adding more redeemable qualities to the character of Lillian. I also would like to give Benjamin at least one flaw; as he is right now, he's seems unfairly perfect. I would make sure to do an extra check of the technical systems before the day of the performance. I would be more active on social media: I did some work on Facebook, but I think a little more work could have brought more audience members into the room.

Moving forward, I believe that I will continue to look back on this project. I have learned so many things, about writing a play, producing it, marketing it, and performing it. I also feel like I learned a lot about myself and the way I work from this project. In the future, it will absolutely be necessary for me to set aside time to work on specific projects at a time. If I want to be able to focus and get my work done, I need strict goals and deadlines. I also need to remember to give myself the time to do the work. I feel like this project helped teach me how to lead and

collaborate at the same time. Combining these two tasks is something I will continue needing to practice. I also want to do more with this play, as I have really enjoyed the process of writing it and seeing it come to life. Next time it is performed, I want to just watch. I want to be able to observe the work in its entirety from a slightly more objective point of view. I feel like looking at the play this way will be an important next step in improving the play. From there, I would be interested in submitting the play to theaters and festivals, which would be a huge step for me because I've never been comfortable sharing my own writing. The most important piece I took from this project is the ability to share my work. The other skills I have picked up on and improved are also very important, but as a theatre artist going out into the world, I think it's important that I find ways to tell stories I want to tell.

Face to Face (Back to Back)

Written by Samantha Flannelly

Cast

Lillian- College Student. Driven.

Benjamin- College Student. Passion for expression.

Emma- College Student. Instructor for ballroom club.

Mia- College Student. Member of ballroom club.

Christopher- College Student. Member of another ballroom club.

Christopher's Boyfriend

Link to Staged Reading in Box: <https://ballstate.box.com/s/9u6cw7r6z0bpepl6cvlt6lkgcuiipj67>

SCENE 1

(Setting. Crowded space. Chatter everywhere, overlapping. Welcome to Ball State have you heard about-- Hi! Welcome to the activity fair!-- Are you interested in-- Spectrum is a group that-- Hi!-- Ball State Finance Society-- Welcome to Ball State-- Our equestrian club travels-- Hola!-- Our sorority really prides itself-- Hey man!-- ETA meets-- Belly dance is Wednesdays at--)

LILLIAN

Hi! Are you interested in ballroom dancing?

(Everything stops)

BENJAMIN

Ballroom Dancing?

LILLIAN

Yeah! You know, like waltz, tango, foxtrot, cha cha...

BENJAMIN

I don't really know how to dance so..

(Benjamin starts to walk away. Lillian panics)

LILLIAN

That's really fine! We don't require any experience! Or Partner! Most people that come into the club don't know how to ballroom dance. *(He still hasn't left-- wow)* We exist as a club to teach people! We also compete, but I don't want to throw too much at you at once. Here's our info and meeting times. Will I see you there?

BENJAMIN

(a little excited but a little overwhelmed) Maybe. I'll try to make it out! I don't know how busy I'll be.

LILLIAN

What's your major?

BENJAMIN

Architecture

LILLIAN

Oh. Cool.

BENJAMIN

Why do you say it like that?

LILLIAN

You're an architecture major. It's just a really busy major. Good luck finding time to breathe.

(Lillian starts to walk away. Ben looks at Lillian, confused and a little hurt. Ben starts to walk away. Emma, Lillian's friend, who was nearby but not paying attention, turns to join the conversation.)

EMMA

Hi! Are you interested in ballroom?

BENJAMIN

I was. But apparently, I don't have the time.

(Ben shoots a look at Lillian. Emma seems to have an immediate hold on the situation. She steps in front of Lillian to address Benjamin.)

EMMA

I don't know what she said to you, but we would be ecstatic to see you at our callout meeting next week.

LILLIAN

All I said was--

EMMA

Thank you so much for stopping by. Here's a flier! We really hope to see you Wednesday!

(Ben waves and walks away. Emma turns on Lillian.)

EMMA

What the hell, Lillian?

(Mia runs up to the two.)

MIA

Ooooooooooooo. Who is that?

EMMA

He's—

LILLIAN *(Interrupting)*

It doesn't matter. He's an architecture major. He won't have time for us.

EMMA

You don't get to make that decision for him!

MIA

Yeah, maybe he just needs to meet the right person. People. Meet the right people.

EMMA

Hopefully we can all be the right people. We could really use some male leads.

MIA (*Day dreaming as she walks away*)

I could really use that male as *my* lead.

LILLIAN

I was so close. He's the right height and everything.

EMMA

Oh my God! You turned him away because you think you can't have him as a partner? Come on Lillian.

LILLIAN

It's not just that. I mean it is. It's just. I'm just tired of not advancing Em. I want a boy partner. That's the only way I'll make it and you know it.

EMMA

How many times do I have to tell you? It's not your fault the judges won't place a same sex couple.

LILLIAN

You don't get it Emma. You've placed. I feel like garbage every single competition, every time I look at that screen and see I didn't make it to the next round. I don't even care if it's last place- I just want to make it to finals.

EMMA (*Side hugging Lillian.*)

Maybe this year will be your year.

LILLIAN (*Looks in direction Benjamin walked.*)

Maybe.

(*End Scene.*)

SCENE 2

(*Dance studio. The floor is crowded. There is a lot of nervous chatter. The more experienced members are trying to make the newbies comfortable. Lillian steps out, a little excited, a little nervous herself.*)

LILLIAN

Hi everyone and thank you for coming out! I'm Lilly and I'm the Vice President of Ballroom. The way tonight will go, is we will start with some demonstrations from older members in our

club. After that we'll have a lesson in waltz! Our demo partnership is Joseph and Emma and they will be dancing the waltz and then cha cha. Joe and Em (*motions to dance floor with hand*).

(Joe and Emma begin to dance. The people in the room watch in amazement. They've never seen real people dance like Joe and Em are dancing. Benjamin has a wide smile on his face. Lillian proudly watches the couple on the floor. She glances around the room, pleased that the newbies are interested. When the demonstrations end, the people in the room applaud.)

LILLIAN

Alright, so we are going to go ahead and get started with our waltz lesson. Emma will be teaching the lesson tonight.

EMMA

Hi everyone! We're going to start with the box. (*Demonstrating*) This box is the waltz basic. It's 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. Repeat.

(The difference between the new dancers and the old is obvious, but most of the dancers are enjoying themselves.)

EMMA

Next, I'm gonna need my leads to form two lines, facing the mirror. Follows, find a partner. We'll be rotating partners so everyone will have an opportunity to dance with someone.

(Lily and Benjamin face each other.)

LILLIAN

Hi Benjamin! You came!

(She beams, happy to see him enjoying himself. Happy to have been wrong. Benjamin is a little off put by her welcoming behavior- so different from the last time he talked to her.)

BENJAMIN

Hey Lily. It's actually just Ben.

LILLIAN

Well, hello Ben.

(Lily gets to work getting Ben into frame.)

BENJAMIN

Here?

LILLIAN

Yep.

(Emma walks around the room instructing the couples. She watches Lily, making sure she doesn't scare Ben away again.)

BENJAMIN

So, uh, how long have you been dancing?

LILLIAN

Oh, my whole life! I'm trained in ballet, jazz, and tap. I just started ballroom dancing last year though, so it's relatively new to me. Do you have any experience?

BENJAMIN

I've done a little for theatre, but never anything major.

LILLIAN

Theatre?

BENJAMIN

Yeah. I almost majored in it, but I wanted to make money.

LILLIAN

So architecture is your back up plan?

EMMA *(Shouting above all the nervous chatter in the room)*

Okay, everyone! Leads-- you will be stepping forward with your right foot. Follows, you will be stepping back on your right foot. And 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3.

LILLIAN

You're pretty good.

BENJAMIN *(concentrating)*

Thanks.

EMMA

Rotate partners. Follows move one to the right.

BENJAMIN

It's not necessarily a back up--

LILLIAN

See ya!

(Emma shoots Lillian a look.)

LILLIAN

We'll chat later!

(“Fast forward” the lesson. Music playing in the background, movement happening in double time. When Lillian gets to Emma they step forward. The waltz behind them continues at the normal tempo. Everyone on stage is silent. Lily and Emma waltz and watch Ben.)

EMMA
He’s pretty good.

LILLIAN
I know! I can’t believe this is his first lesson.

EMMA
I’m glad you’re excited Lil but calm down. You don’t know that he’s interested in competing yet. Besides the club needs him and we don’t want to scare him away.

LILLIAN *(Clearly, she was not just listening to Emma)*
Yeah, yeah.

(Lillian is swallowed back into the rotation. The rotation continues at higher speed until Lillian gets back to Benjamin. Time slows back to normal. Emma watches, worried for her friend, from the sidelines, until she makes her end-of-lesson announcement.)

EMMA
That’ll be it for tonight! Thank you so much for everyone that came out! We can’t wait to see you next week. Try to bring a friend!

LILLIAN
How was your first lesson?

BENJAMIN
It was so good! *(Sarcastically)* I’m glad I somehow found time to come.

LILLIAN
Ouch. I guess I deserved that.

BENJAMIN *(Shrugs.)*
It’s not a big deal.

LILLIAN
No, it was shitty of me to treat you like I did. I’m sorry.

BENJAMIN
Really, it is okay.

LILLIAN
So.. have you thought about competing?

BENJAMIN

Uhm. I mean, it's my first lesson. I don't know.

LILLIAN

I think you should consider it. You have a lot of potential.

BENJAMIN

Why do you think that?

(Mia walks over and inserts herself into the conversation.)

MIA

Hi, Benjamin! Did you say you were thinking about competing?

BENJAMIN

I mean I don't know. I just started dancing. I don't know that I'm good enough.

MIA

Pish posh! You were great tonight!

(Mia laughs and puts her hand on Benjamin's arm.)

BENJAMIN

Thanks.

(Ben pulls his arm from Mia's grasp.)

MIA

If you change your mind, let me know. I'm looking for a new partner.

(Lillian stares at Mia with her mouth open. Mia flashes her a smile, then flounces away. Lillian attempts to pull herself together before turning to Ben.)

LILLIAN

As you can see, you can pretty much take your pick as far as follows go. There certainly isn't a shortage of girls who want a male lead.

BENJAMIN

Do you have to be a male to compete as a lead?

LILLIAN *(Hesitates)*

No? It helps though. Ballroom is pretty old school. They like a good ol' fashioned man dancing with a graceful lady.

BENJAMIN

How archaic.

LILLIAN

You're telling me. I've danced Bronze for a year, but I never get to the next round at comp. Emma was my partner. She's honestly the best dancer I know, but I want to place and it's just kinda harder to do for same sex couples.

BENJAMIN

So you need a partner too?

LILLIAN

I'd like one, yeah.

BENJAMIN

And that's why you want me to compete?

LILLIAN

I mean I want everyone to compete. Especially more male leads. But yes, specifically you for selfish reasons. I don't want to pressure you into anything you don't feel comfortable with, but I do want to let you know-- I can teach you.

BENJAMIN

Thanks, Lily. I'll think about it.

(Emma walks over to Lilly as Ben leaves.)

EMMA

Will he be coming back?

LILLIAN

God I hope so.

(End Scene.)

SCENE 3

(Dance studio. Benjamin and Lillian are alone. She is teaching him rumba. They are working on the cross-body lead.)

LILLIAN

Yeah, that's it. Slow, quick quick, slow, quick quick slow, quick quick slow. Yep. And now you're back to the basic.

BENJAMIN

Sweet!

LILLIAN

I told you you'd get it. Are you ready to try it in frame?

BENJAMIN

Yeah! Let's do it.

LILLIAN

Alright, invite me in.

(Benjamin holds out his hand. Lillian saunters up to him and places her hand in his. He is trying not to laugh.)

LILLIAN

What's so funny?

(Lillian is offended that Benjamin is laughing at her. She steps away from him.)

BENJAMIN

Oh nothing! It's just a little intense.

LILLIAN

Have you ever watched anyone rumba?

BENJAMIN

No.. Listen Lily, I'm not laughing at you. This is all so new. You're doing a great job, I'm sure. And I really appreciate you teaching me. Come back.

(Lillian looks at Benjamin. Saunters back to him.)

LILLIAN

Slow, quick quick, slow. Nope start over. Slow, quick quick, slow, quick quick. Stop. Start over. Slow, quick. Ben.

BENJAMIN

I know, I know! I said I was sorry. Can you lay off?

LILLIAN

We could be so good Ben.

BENJAMIN

We will. One day. For today I need you to chill a little. I'm feeling overwhelmed.

LILLIAN

Okay, okay. We'll start at the beginning. Slow..

(Lillian's voice fades out as they start to work on the dancing. Lillian watches with growing attraction in her eyes. They pause from the dancing. Benjamin walks away to go get a drink. Lillian watches.)

LILLIAN

I think we're going to work on crossover breaks next.

BENJAMIN

What are those?

(Lillian goes to the floor and demonstrates.)

BENJAMIN

Ooooo I like that one!

LILLIAN

It's in a bunch of different dances, so this will be really useful.

(Lillian walks Benjamin through the steps first. Then they get to arm styling. Benjamin is doing the arm styling he watched Lilly do earlier. His arm and wrist are overly feminine looking.)

BENJAMIN

I feel like I'm having a really hard time with the arms.

LILLIAN

I did too when I started. *(Watches him try the styling.)* I would recommend putting your hand on your waist.

BENJAMIN

Like this?

LILLIAN

Yep! How does that feel?

BENJAMIN

Kinda boring actually. I like your styling way more.

LILLIAN

Well that's the girl's styling.

BENJAMIN

But why limit it to follows?

LILLIAN

Because they want the leads to look more masculine.

BENJAMIN

Why does masculine have to equate to boring?

LILLIAN

I don't know! I didn't make the rules! Shit! It's 5, I have to run. Are you staying here?

BENJAMIN

Yeah, I'm going to work on Rumba some more.

LILLIAN

Awesome! I'll see you tomorrow?

BENJAMIN

Yep! See you tomorrow.

(Lillian exits. Ben looks at himself in the mirror, tries the move with the hand on the hip. Doesn't like it. Looks out to see if Lillian is gone. Looks back into the mirror. Works on arm styling he finds more interesting. Continues working as the lights go down.)

SCENE 4

(This scene is a fluid set up of tableaux. Ben and Lily are learning how to dance with each other. In the beginning, the focus is on the dancing. Lily is teaching Ben how to dance. Each tableau is a different dance style. The longer the poses go on, the less Lily is teaching, the more they are just dancing. Eventually the setting becomes more fluid. The couple isn't just in the dance studio. They're walking together and doing other activities as their relationship grows. The last tableau is the two holding hands. Blackout.)

SCENE 5

(The lights are dim. Party lighting. The perimeter of the room is crowded. Music is playing. There are couples dancing in the middle of the floor. None of the couples are doing anything elaborate. The focus is on our characters: Lillian, Benjamin, Mia, and Emma.)

BENJAMIN

I think I'm gonna be sick.

LILLIAN

Oh, you'll be fine. It's just the welcome dance. Don't be such a drama queen.

BENJAMIN

Why did you guys say I should wear this? I'm the only one in a costume!

MIA

You look great, Ben.

LILLIAN (*Feeling for Benjamin.*)

Yeah, sorry about that. Usually more people dress up.

MIA (*To Ben.*)

I'm dressed up. Can you guess my costume?

LILLIAN (*To Emma.*)

A desperate, partner stealing ho bag?

EMMA (*Laughs loudly*)

Shh.

BENJAMIN

Uh, no. What are you supposed to be?

MIA

I'm like a modern version of Aphrodite.

(Mia smiles up at Benjamin. He returns the smile. Lillian rolls her eyes.)

BENJAMIN

That's fun.

MIA

Thanks! Wanna dance?

BENJAMIN

Actually, I should probably practice with Lily. I'm really nervous for tomorrow.

MIA

Oh I'm sure you'll be fantastic, Ben. I'm so excited for your first competition!

BENJAMIN

Thanks, me too. Lily?

(Benjamin holds his hand out in invitation for Lily. She smiles at him and they move to the floor. They don't dance for long before the song ends.)

BENJAMIN

Thanks.

LILLIAN

I think we need to work a little more on our swing and sway. We start out really strong, but we can't keep it up.

BENJAMIN

I'm working on it.

LILLIAN

And you're doing a great job. I just think you could do a little more. You pick everything up so fast.

BENJAMIN

Do you ever just dance for fun?

LILLIAN

Sure, just not the night before the competition.

(Benjamin shakes his head at Lillian, baffled.)

LILLIAN

Look, if you have a problem with it, why don't you just dance with Mia?

BENJAMIN

Lily, I didn't mean it like--

LILLIAN

Really, it's no issue. Have fun with her. Let me know when you're ready to practice.

(Lillian grabs her water bottle and exits. Benjamin looks after her, annoyed and confused. He waits to see if she'll just come right back. She doesn't. He looks around and sees Mia standing nearby. As soon as she notices him, she goes to him.)

MIA

She's always a little tense before a comp. She just wants to place.

BENJAMIN

Want to dance?

MIA

Sure!

(Benjamin leads Mia out to the floor. While they dance together, Lillian reenters. When she sees the two dancing, she turns around and exits again. Emma, who has been dancing a little, but stands to the side now, notices and follows Lillian from the room. Focus on stage expands. There is a couple in the middle of the floor that is particularly mesmerizing. The couple is partially marking their dance, but even half working, they capture the attention of everyone in the room. Especially Benjamin.)

BENJAMIN *(Breathlessly)*

Who is that?

MIA

That's Diana. She's a pre-champ dancer.

BENJAMIN

Who is he?

MIA

Oh, his name is Stephen. He's her new partner, I guess. I wonder what happened to Bobby. Just wait until you see them tomorrow. They'll probably be the best couple on the floor.

(Lillian and Emma enter and stand with team to watch Diana and Stephen. The song ends. Benjamin's determination is now almost visible in his body as he stares at Stephen.)

BENJAMIN

Thanks for the dance, Mia. *(Benjamin's focus zeroes in on Lily as he leads Mia back to the team.)* Lily? Can we dance? *(Correcting himself.)* Can we practice?

LILLIAN

Yeah.

(Benjamin leads Lily out to the floor.)

BENJAMIN

I'm sorry about earlier.

LILLIAN

It's okay.

(Benjamin smiles at Lillian. He looks around for someone. Smiles when he sees him. Blackout.)

SCENE 6

(Benjamin and Lillian are standing in line, waiting to go onto the dance floor. Benjamin is bouncing with nerves. Lillian is smiling up at him. Announcer: "Heat 2 to the floor, please." Confidence settles over Benjamin as he chooses his place. Announcer: "Foxtrot music, please." Benjamin invites Lillian in and the two start their dance. Benjamin starts trying to show off. He adds in some of the femininity he was practicing. A judge looks over, shakes their head, and looks away. Lillian watches it happen and trips over her feet. Benjamin stop and readjust. They dance until the end of the song, bow, and move to the side of the room.)

LILLIAN

What the fuck, Ben?

BENJAMIN
It's not that big--

LILLIAN
Don't you dare finish that sentence. It's a huge deal. We are partners. You can't change things on the floor without letting me know first!

BENJAMIN
Oh whatever!

LILLIAN
Whatever? I watched the judge shake his head at us.

BENJAMIN
We both know this is about. You're not mad I changed the routine a tiny bit! You're mad that I'm not the perfect macho man. You're mad that I want to have fun with the dance. Arms on the hips is boring!

LILLIAN
I didn't make the rules!

BENJAMIN
No! But you'll follow them happily because they don't affect you!

LILLIAN
Ben--

BENJAMIN
(Starting to talk with his hands the more animated he gets.) No, it's bullshit. Man dances with Woman. Woman is beautiful and graceful and sparkly. Man is straight and strong and boring. I feel like I'm just here to make sure you don't fall over while you dance! It's suffocating. I want to matter in this partnership because we love each other and we're partners-- not because I have a penis. You know what, if that's what you want you can go ahead and find another partner. I joined this club because I thought it would be fun to dance and break out of gender norms, but this only enforces them. You only enforce them.

LILLIAN *(Softly.)*
Ben..

BENJAMIN
What?

LILLIAN
I think that's the most I've ever heard you speak at once.

BENJAMIN

That's all you have to say?

(Ben starts to walk away. Lillian reaches out.)

LILLIAN

Ben! I'm sorry! I can tell you're really passionate about this, but I don't know what to say, okay?

BENJAMIN

Say you understand. Say we'll change it.

LILLIAN

(Trying to get her thoughts in order) I--

(Mia runs over and grabs Benjamin.)

MIA

Diana is dancing! You have to come see her!

(With one last look at Lillian, Benjamin goes with Mia. Lillian follows after them. The whole stage is tuned into Diana and Stephen dancing. There are a lot of dancers cheering for the couple. Benjamin is mesmerized by Stephen. Lillian is trying to watch Stephen, but she can't seem to keep her eyes off Benjamin. The couple finishes dancing. Lights fade to blackout.)

SCENE 7

(Lillian and Benjamin are back in the dance studio. He's pacing around the space excitedly.)

BENJAMIN

And did you see his tango? When he dances, he's so fluid and fierce! I can't wait until I'm that good. How long do you think it would take for us to be at that level? 5 years? I think we can do it! Yesterday: Bronze-- my future: 1st place in Champ!

LILLIAN

Is that what you want?

BENJAMIN

Yes! Absolutely!

LILLIAN

With me?

BENJAMIN

What? What do you mean? Of course, with you! Do you not want to dance together?

LILLIAN

Woah, slow down Ben! Obviously, I want to dance with you. This is just going to be a really big commitment. I want to make sure you know what you're getting yourself into. That's a lot of time to spend with a person.

BENJAMIN

That's okay! Today is the first day of the best of our lives! We need to set some rules.

LILLIAN

(Having a hard time keeping up with Benjamin.) Rules?

BENJAMIN

Yeah. For one, I can do whatever I damn please with my arms.

LILLIAN

Do you want us to place?

BENJAMIN

I do. But this is more important to me.

(Lillian hesitates and looks at Benjamin.)

LILLIAN

Okay.

BENJAMIN

Okay, what?

LILLIAN

Okay, you can do what you want with your arms. And your face. Now it's my turn for a rule.

BENJAMIN

Shoot.

LILLIAN

No rhinestones until we're gold dancers.

BENJAMIN

But--

LILLIAN

Nope! I get what you're trying to do, but it's tacky! We can have the sparkles when we're good enough for the sparkles!

BENJAMIN *Huffs.*) Fine. My turn! No secrets!

LILLIAN

Secrets about what? About what I really think of your dancing?

(Lillian smirks at Benjamin.)

BENJAMIN

About anything. I need to trust my partner.

(The smirk falters.)

LILLIAN

Okay..

BENJAMIN

Is this one going to be an issue for you?

LILLIAN

(Too quickly.) Of course not! Partners forever?

(Lillian holds out her pinky, Ben shakes it.)

BENJAMIN

Can I ask a kind of personal question?

LILLIAN

Of course.

BENJAMIN

How was your first competition not competing with Emma?

LILLIAN

It was a little weird. I mean she's my best friend. But also, I want to place, and I don't think she gets it. To her, ballroom is the amazing opportunity to connect with other people and express yourself through technique. She's passionate about our club for all the right reasons. She cares about the people. And I love that she feels that way. And don't get me wrong, I love this club, but I also love the competition and the rigor. We just have different goals, I guess.

BENJAMIN

And you don't think things will be weird now that you're dancing with me instead?

LILLIAN

I don't think so. Partners or not, she's my best friend and we'll always be there for each other. *(Shrugs.)* Well one of my best friends.

(Lillian smiles at Ben. He smiles back. No one has anything to say. After sitting in the silence, both speak up at the same time.)

LILLIAN
Ben?

BENJAMIN
Lily?

LILLIAN
You go first.

BENJAMIN
No, you.

LILLIAN
Uhm, I--

BENJAMIN
Well what I--

(Lillian and Ben both Awkward laugh)

LILLIAN
You seem a little—

BENJAMIN
Yeah, you seem a little

LILLIAN
Uncomfortable?

BENJAMIN
Yeah. Me too.

(Ben and Lilly look at each other.)

BENJAMIN
Wanna just say it at the same time?

LILLIAN
Sure! Okay. *(Takes a deep breath.)* 3, 2, 1.

(The following lines run together.)

LILLIAN
I think I'm in love with you.

BENJAMIN
I'm gay.

LILLIAN
What?

BENJAMIN
What?

LILLIAN

Oh.. I-- nothing. You're gay?

BENJAMIN

Lil, did you say you're in love with me?

(Lillian buries her face in her hands)

LILLIAN

Yeah?

BENJAMIN

Oh. And you heard me say I'm gay?

LILLIAN

Yeah

(Benjamin walks to over to where Lillian is sitting on the floor. He wraps his arms around her and lays his head on top of hers. Lights fade out.)

Scene 8

(Benjamin is alone in the practice studio. He works by himself but becomes increasingly impatient. He pays attention to the time and the door, waiting for his partner. Mia runs into the room.)

MIA

Hey, Ben! Sorry I'm late! I had a paper I had to finish because it's due at Midnight and my group isn't doing anything and--

BENJAMIN

Mia, you're rambling. Also, what do you mean sorry you're late? Are you practicing with Emma?

MIA

No! I'm supposed to be meeting you, silly!

BENJAMIN

I don't understand.

MIA

Lily told me yesterday that you guys just weren't working well together and she thought maybe we could be partners. Why she would let a partner like you go, I have absolutely no idea. But who am I to pass up an opportunity like this? Did she not tell you she talked to me? I would have thought she would have told you.

(Benjamin is processing.)

MIA

I really don't like that she didn't talk to you. Is she just trying to embarrass me? Are you guys still partners?

BENJAMIN

Mia! Stop! I don't know what's going on.

MIA

Is it because your gay? Do you think that's why she left?

BENJAMIN

What did you just say?

MIA

So you are! Damnit!

BENJAMIN (*Quiet*)

Is there something wrong with homosexuality, Mia?

MIA

Oh my god! This makes so much sense!

BENJAMIN (*Confused*)

What does?

MIA

You didn't want me because you're gay!

BENJAMIN

Mia--

MIA

Oh my god!! Is that why Lily dropped you? What a bitch!

BENJAMIN

MIA! Stop talking! I don't know what's going on, but I know that I need you to just stop.

(Mia is stunned. People don't often tell her what to do.)

BENJAMIN

I can't have this conversation with you right now.

MIA

Yeah. Right.

(Silence.)

MIA

I'm gonna go.

(Mia exits. Ben is alone.)

BENJAMIN

Fuck.

(Benjamin pulls out his phone and calls Lily. Only Benjamin's side of the conversation can be heard. Lily doesn't pick up, so Benjamin leaves a voicemail for her.)

BENJAMIN

Lily, this is so fucked up.

(Benjamin hangs up the phone. Blackout.)

Scene 9

(Jumping right into a weekly lesson. The room has members dancing with each other, but one is noticeably absent-- Benjamin.)

EMMA

Switch!

(The follows move down one lead. Lily is now standing in front of Emma. The two do the dance with everyone else in the room while they talk.)

LILLIAN

Emma, I really messed up.

EMMA

Ben?

LILLIAN

How did you know?

EMMA

Ben never misses a lesson.

LILLIAN

(Mumbles.) I told him I was in love with him.

EMMA

Lily, I can't hear you when you mumble.

LILLIAN

I told him I was in love with him!

(Emma stops dancing and stares at Lillian.)

EMMA

Oh, Lil.

LILLIAN

Keep dancing. People are watching.

EMMA

Why did you wait until now to tell me?

LILLIAN

I mean, it didn't go well.

EMMA

I guess not. Do you want to talk about it?

LILLIAN

It's just that..

EMMA

WHAT? Just tell me already!

LILLIAN

He's gay.

EMMA

Oh.

LILLIAN

Yeah.

EMMA

Oh.

LILLIAN

Yeah.

EMMA

How did you handle that news?

LILLIAN

I didn't. I—I left him that day in the studio and I haven't talked to him since. Also I potentially told Mia that he was looking for a new partner.

EMMA

You didn't. (*Lillian doesn't say anything.*) Why would you think that's remotely okay? He's your friend Lillian. He's all of our friend and he isn't here tonight because of you. You let him down when he needed you the most. I'm kind of disgusted with you right now. He opened up--

(Mia storms into the room and right to Lillian.)

MIA

How could you do that to me? To him?

LILLIAN

I--

MIA

No! Ben is a good person. He deserves better than you. I don't care if he's gay. I'll dance with him anyways. How dare you discriminate against him for his sexuality!

(Mia gives Lily a dirty look.)

LILLIAN

You don't know what you're talking about!

(Lilly runs out of the room.)

EMMA (*Agreeing with Mia, but not wanting the lesson to fall apart completely.*)

Alright everyone, stop gawking. Back to your partners. We're going to work on the "face to face, back to back."

(Blackout.)

Scene 10

(Lily is sitting alone. Ben walks up and sits next to her. They sit in the silence for a moment. Lily isn't looking at Ben.)

LILLIAN

How did you find me?

BENJAMIN

Lil

LILLIAN

What?

BENJAMIN
This is your spot.

LILLIAN
Oh.

(Silence.)

BENJAMIN
Can we talk?

LILLIAN
Is that not what this is?

BENJAMIN
Lillian, stop being like this. You can't treat me like shit just because you're embarrassed. And sending Mia after me? Really?

(Lillian finally looks at Ben.)

LILLIAN
I guess I went a little too far.

(Ben quirks an eyebrow.)

LILLIAN
I'm sorry.

BENJAMIN *(Not letting her off the hook that easily)*
For?

LILLIAN *(Mumbles.)*
Everything.

BENJAMIN
I need you to say it Lily. We can't fix this until you can say it out loud.

LILLIAN *(Suddenly and fiercely.)*
Ben, I am so sorry. You're gay and that's great. I just need--needed-- time to adjust. My time away has had everything to do with me and absolutely nothing to do with you. I mean I love you-gay or not. I love you love you, not in love with you love you. Oh god. Ben. I'm so sorry.

(Ben reaches out for Lilly.)

BENJAMIN

I really appreciate your apology, Lily.

(Lilly falls into Ben. The two sit in their silence for a moment before Lillian looks at Benjamin curiously.)

LILLIAN

So.. are we okay then?

BENJAMIN

We're on our way to being okay.

LILLIAN

Since we're friends again, can I ask a favor?

BENJAMIN

Really?

LILLIAN

Emma hasn't talked to me in weeks. She thinks what I did to you was horribly wrong. And she was right, but I can't get her to listen to me apologize. The way she sees it, I didn't only hurt you, I hurt the integrity of the club, that one of our members would be treated the way I treated you. She's really disappointed in me. And I know what I did was wrong. I'll make it up to you, I swear. But in the meantime, could you potentially see if you can get her to talk to me again?

BENJAMIN

I think I can do that for you.

LILLIAN

Thank you, Ben. *(After a moment)* Can I ask questions?

BENJAMIN

Of course. No secrets, I meant it.

LILLIAN

What *(hesitates)* changed?

BENJAMIN

I don't know that it was that anything really changed. I think I was just too afraid to think about it before? I mean you've met my parents. I was always taught that homosexuality was wrong. And I thought it was wrong for a long time. My brother gave me a lot of shit when I told him I started ballroom dancing. "As if theatre isn't gay enough, you want to prance around more?" It was Devon. You haven't met him yet. I don't know if you will. He refuses to come to a competition. Says he doesn't want to watch that *(air quotes)* "gay shit". And he's the favorite. Explain that to me.

LILLIAN

He's the football player, right?

BENJAMIN

(Getting more dramatic as he goes.) Team captain. Quarterback. Heartthrob. Star of the basketball team. An all-around, all American man. *(Done with his game.)* I hated trying to live up to that. I can't tell you how many times my dad suggested I go to the gym with Devon to "beef up". I've never been the kind of man he wanted me to be.

LILLIAN

Because you didn't play football and have big muscles? That's such bullshit. There are plenty of men who don't do those things.

BENJAMIN

(Mocking.) Not real men. Not according to him.

LILLIAN

Oh my god. I was just like him. I basically told you you weren't good enough. Ben, I'm so sorry!

BENJAMIN

I mean you said it yourself, it's not you, it's the ballroom world.

LILLIAN

So. Where do we go from here?

BENJAMIN

I don't know.

LILLIAN *(Thinks for a moment.)*

Who cares if we place?

BENJAMIN

What?

LILLIAN

I don't care if we place. I mean it.

BENJAMIN

That's your dream Lily. I don't want to ask you to give that up.

LILLIAN

You're not asking. And it was my dream, yeah. But this matters more. You matter more to me than some stupid ribbon.

BENJAMIN *(With a huge smile.)*

Let's change the world, Lil.

LILLIAN
Let's.

(Blackout.)

Scene 11

(A competition, 5 years after the previous scene. The progression through time to get to this point should be similar of that in the first two time warps. Using tableaux and a fast forward of time, we watch Ben and Lilly grow even closer and work even harder. Blackout. Then, the lights gradually come up. This scene should look vaguely familiar. The crowd watches as a novice couple stuns the audience. As the room brightens, it is revealed that Benjamin and Lillian are the couple in the middle of the floor. Benjamin is owning every bit of his stage presence and the crowd is loving it. The couple is sparkling in every sense of the word. There is one boy watching with clear adoration in his eyes. He stands in the front of the crowd and he is holding his boyfriend's hand. As the song ends and the couple bows and exits the floor, the boy drags his boyfriend across the floor to get to them.)

CHRISTOPHER
Hi! Excuse me?

(Lillian notices the boy first.)

LILLIAN
Hello!

BENJAMIN
Hi

CHRISTOPHER
I just wanted to say that you guys looked so amazing out there!

LILLIAN
Thank you.

CHRISTOPHER
No, more than amazing-- Ben, you're my role model!

(Christopher slaps his hand over his mouth, embarrassed. His boyfriend reaches around him and gives him a squeeze. Christopher looks back at Ben.)

CHRISTOPHER
I really admire the way you don't take any shit from these ballroom judges. Your technique is stellar, but there's so much personality in your performance. I just wanted you to know that you're an inspiration.

BENJAMIN

Thank you so much, man. What's your name?

CHRISTOPHER

Oh! It's Christopher.

BENJAMIN

It was really nice to meet you, Christopher. I'm gonna go get changed but find me before the end of the day and we can chat some more.

CHRISTOPHER

Thank you so much!!

(Christopher smiles at Benjamin again and walks away. Lillian gabs Benjamin's hand and beams up at him.)

LILLIAN

You did it.

BENJAMIN

We did it. I love you Lily.

LILLIAN

I love you too, Ben.

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